



Evaluating Educational Exchange as a Public Diplomacy Initiative



IREX Education Programs Division

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IREX

Make a Better World

About IREX

We enable local individuals and institutions to build key elements of a vibrant society:

- quality education
- independent media
- strong communities

To strengthen these sectors, our program activities also include conflict resolution, technology for development, gender, and youth.



Work in Public Diplomacy

- Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship Program (2005 - present)
- Global Undergraduate Exchange Program in Eurasia and Central Asia (2002-present)
- Global Undergraduate Exchange Program in Pakistan (2010-present)
- Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program (2005-present)
- International Leaders in Education Program (2005-present)
- Community Solutions Program (2010-present)
- Teachers for Global Classrooms (NEW)

Session Overview

1. Challenges to evaluating educational exchanges as public diplomacy initiatives
2. Using the right tools and asking the right questions
3. Innovative data analysis
4. Discussion

*Methods
developed in
collaboration
with*



SOCIAL IMPACT



The Case Studies

Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship Program

Overarching Goal: Promote mutual understanding, build democracy, and foster the transition to market economies in Eurasia through intensive academic study and professional training.



Program Goal: Returning Muskie fellows contribute professionally, engage in democratic processes in their home countries, and strengthen relationships between the U.S. and their home countries.



The Case Studies

Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program International Leaders in Education Program

Overarching Purpose for ECA Teacher Exchange Programs: To improve mutual understanding among teachers, school administrators, and their schools and communities in the U.S. and abroad through professional development and exchange.



Program Goal: Students in TEA/ILEP countries (international and U.S.) have enhanced learning outcomes and a globalized learning environment.



Why Evaluate Public Diplomacy?





Why Evaluate Public Diplomacy?

What is the impact of our investment?

How can we learn from our experiences to strengthen program implementation?

Why Evaluate Public Diplomacy?

How can we measure mutual understanding?



How can we measure the impact of exchanges on a country's development?



Challenges





VIDEO CLIP: In a Fellow's Words



Natalya Semyonova
Muskie Fellow, 2009



Challenges to Evaluating Public Diplomacy Programs

- Bias in and limitations of self-reporting
- Getting beyond anecdotes and collecting reliable data
- Accurately measuring attitudinal change
- Linking attitudinal change to behavioral change



Using the Right Tools, Asking the Right Questions





Using the Right Tools, Asking the Right Questions

...to go beyond self-reporting

Muskie: Indicator –

% positive change in mean of fellows with positive attitudinal changes in 10 indicators of democratic values



Muskie Tool: The LEAD Index

(Leadership, Engagement, and Democracy)

- A set of questions, measured on a Likert Scale (Strongly Agree/Moderately Agree/Moderately Disagree/Undecided).
- Sample Questions for Democratic Values Indicator:
 - All citizens have the right to information about actions and expenditures of public officials.
 - If a community supports one political party, other parties should not be allowed to campaign in that area.
 - All citizens, regardless of educational level and political affiliation, have the right to publically express their opinion.



Muskie Tool: The LEAD Index

(Leadership, Engagement, and Democracy)

- Online Survey Tool (SurveyMonkey) for quantitative and qualitative data
- Baseline Survey
- Final Survey

Results can be compared to analyze existence of bias



Using the Right Tools, Asking the Right Questions

...to get beyond anecdotes

**TEA/ILEP seeks to gather more broad-based
evidence to measure our first outcome:**

- TEA/ILEP Fellows will serve as cultural ambassadors between their home/host country and the U.S.



TEA/ILEP Tools for Data Collection

Survey Tool (Survey Monkey)

Baseline Survey

On-going Follow-Up Surveys

Survey	Time of Collection
Baseline	immediately prior to the beginning of the program
Follow-on #1	6 months after program concludes
Follow-on #2	18 months after program concludes
Follow-on #3	42 months after program concludes
Subsequent follow-on surveys	every 24 months thereafter



TEA/ILEP Tools for Data Collection

Sample indicators and questions to measure Outcome 1 of TEA/ILEP Program

Outcome 1 – TEA/ILEP Fellows (international and U.S.) serve as cultural ambassadors between their home / host country and the U.S.

% increase in TEA/ILEP Fellows (international) who communicate with U.S. educator(s)

Do you currently communicate with a U.S. educator(s)? If so, how often? Once a week, Once a month, A few times a year, Once a year, Less than once a year, Never

% of TEA/ILEP Fellows who have altered their perceptions of U.S. citizens and culture

What are the first 5 words (positive and/or negative) that come to mind when you think of the people and culture of the United States?



Using the Right Tools, Asking the Right Questions

...to measure attitudinal change

TEA/ILEP: Indicator

% increase of TEA/ILEP Fellows who
have altered their perceptions of U.S.
citizens and culture



Using the Right Tools, Asking the Right Questions

Sample Wordle derived from total results of the following baseline and post-program survey question: What are the first 5 word (positive and/or negative) that come to mind when you think of the people and culture of the United States?

Six months after program:





Using the Right Tools, Asking the Right Questions

...to link attitudinal change to behavioral change

Muskie Program Goal and Indicators:

Carefully selected behavioral change indicators are developed based on the Program Goal.



Linking attitudinal change to behavioral change

Muskie Program Goal: Returning Muskie fellows contribute professionally, engage in democratic processes in their home countries, and strengthen relationships between the U.S. and their home countries.

Indicator:

% increase over baseline for cadre of Muskie alumni serving in a leadership position

Indicator:

% of alumni reporting a meaningful contribution to institutional change in their home country

Indicator:

% of alumni reporting contact and/or collaboration with entities/individuals in the US based on relationships created during fellowship



Innovative Data Analysis





Innovative Data Analysis

Muskie: Aggregating and analyzing LEAD Index Data.

- Assign numerical values to Likert scale
- Compile responses in Excel
- Calculate differences in mean from baseline-final
- Analyze findings to identify bias



Innovative Data Analysis

LEAD Index - Key (Initial) Findings:

**13% increase in
understanding
of democracy**

**5% increase in
leadership
competencies**

**22% increase in
key technical
skills**



Innovative Data Analysis

TEA/ILEP: Coding data to identify attitudinal change

Pre and Post- Program Survey Question #1:

List any similarities you know of between your home country and the U.S.

Lessons learned in coding data

	A	B	C	D	E	F
	BASELINE					
	1	2	3	4	5	Score
cosmopolitan perspective	geographical position	varied landscapes	long distances	natural resources		5
Politness	Relationship between teachers and students	Cosmopolitan cities	Weather	Festivals		5
fight for independent	farmering on the land					2
	ALUMNI					
	1	2	3	4	5	Score
HOSPITALITY	SOCIABILITY	STRIVING TO COMMUNICATE WITH ANOTHER	POLITENESS	RESPECTFULNESS TO THE ELDERLY, TO THE COUNTRY		5
Hospitality	Diversity	standard of living	teachers' problems at school	all want to visit the USA and Poland		5
president from minority	democracy	resources natural abundant	diversity	opportunity for all		5

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	BASELINE			ALUMNI		
2						
3	Count of Score			Count of Score		
4	Score <input type="button" value="v"/>	Total		Score <input type="button" value="v"/>	Total	
5	0	1		2	1	
6	1	3		3	3	
7	2	5		4	2	
8	3	6		5	28	
9	4	3		Grand Total	34	
10	5	63				
11	Grand Total	81				
12						
13	baseline mean score			alumni mean score		% change =
14	4.42			4.68		6%
15						



Closing the Feedback Loop

How do we use the data?

Evaluation results can.....

- Inform and inspire funders, partners, stakeholders, and participants about program value and impact.
- Advocate for continued investment with legislators and policy-makers.
- Advise implementers of needed adjustments to program design and implementation.



Sharing Inspiring Results

Muskie:

Muskie Fellows Deepen Understand of Democracy:

A 35% increase in the number of fellows who believe that individuals can have direct influence on politicians and political processes.

TEA/ILEP:

Fellows maintain regular contact with a U.S. educator:

A 35% increase from the baseline survey in the number of ILEP Fellows who communicate with a U.S. educator once a month or more.



Strengthening Program Design

TEA/ILEP:

- Based on qualitative monitoring data collected, IREX created additional materials and tools to better set new participants' expectations for their experience.

Muskie:

- Given LEAD Index data, IREX incorporated specific leadership content into online learning opportunities. New LEAD Index data will be compared to earlier cohorts to analyze effectiveness of online learning.



Ongoing Analysis within Evaluation Process

- Experiment and improve systems, tools, and questions.
- Maintain a transparent tracking and data analysis process.
- Be cautious in reporting.



Discussion

How have you addressed the challenges of evaluating public diplomacy initiatives?



Discussion

Questions?



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